

Message Text

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ACTION L-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0118

LIMDIS

USIAEA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAEA, PARM, TECH, AR, PE, US
SUBJECT: ARGENTINE RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO TREATY

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 0056, (B) 77 BUENOS AIRES 9535,
(C) 77 BUENOS AIRES 9137

1. DURING CODEL REUSS MEETING AT FOREIGN MINISTRY, REP.
MOORHEAD REFERRED TO THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE SIGNED DURING
SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA AND ASKED WHEN GOA WOULD
TAKE ACTION TO RATIFY THE TLATELOLCO TREATY. THE REPLY TO THE
QUESTION GIVEN BY TWO GOA OFFICIALS PRESENT WAS AS FOLLOWS:

--- JORGE MATAS, WORKING LEVEL OFFICIAL IN THE MFA DISARMAMENT
DIVISION: THE GOA COULD POSSIBLY CONSIDER INITIATING THE
PROCESS TO RATIFY TLATELOLCO TREATY IN MARCH. HOWEVER,
BEFORE ANY RATIFICATION CAN TAKE PLACE, THE GOA MUST WAIT
UNTIL THE U.S. AGREES TO PROVIDE ARGENTINA WITH HEAVY
WATER TECHNOLOGY.

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--- DR. MARTINEZ FAVINI, LEGAL DIRECTOR OF CNEA: THE CNEA; AS
A TECHNICAL ORGANIZATION, MUST DEFER TO THE MFA ON SUCH
POLITICAL MATTERS AS RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO. HOWEVER,
IN VIEW OF THE BAD EXPERIENCE THE GOA HAS HAD IN NUCLEAR
MATTERS WITH CANADA, ARGENTINA NEEDS SOME CONCRETE FACTS
OR REALITIES FROM THE U.S., NOT JUST WORDS. IN THE JOINT
COMMUNIQUE, THE U.S. AGREED TO PROVIDE ARGENTINA RELEVANT

TECHNOLOGY FOR ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY; TO SUPPLY HEAVY WATER ITSELF IF ARGENTINA IS NOT IN A POSITION TO BUILD ITS OWN HEAVY WATER PLANT; AND TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF FUEL TO BE USED IN THE RESEARCH REACTORS ARGENTINA HAS AGREED TO EXPORT TO PERU. WITH RESPECT TO THE LATTER COMMITMENT, IT APPEARS ALREADY THAT THE U.S. IS OBSTRUCTING RATHER THAN FACILITATING THE SUPPLY OF FUEL FOR THE PERUVIAN TRANSACTIONS (REFTEL A). THE WHOLE NUCLEAR SECTION OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE MUST BE VIEWED AS A PACKAGE.

2. COMMENT: THE RESPONSES GIVEN BY THE GOA OFFICIALS INDICATE THAT THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WAS AGREED TO IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE DIFFERS SHARPLY FROM OURS. THEY MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THEY BELIEVE THE NEXT STEP ("CONCRETE FACTS, NOT WORDS") IS UP TO THE U.S.; I.E. TO MAKE A POSITIVE MOVE EITHER IN THE MATTER OF FUEL TRANSFER TO PERU OR OF HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY BEFORE ARGENTINA TAKES FURTHER STEPS IN THE RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO. IN THEIR MINDS, RATIFICATION OF TLATELOLCO IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO U.S. NUCLEAR COOPERATION IN OTHER AREAS, INCLUDING HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY. THIS MISCONCEPTION, WHETHER REAL OR FICTITIOUS, AS TO WHAT WAS AGREED TO DURING SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT SUGGESTS THAT IT MAY BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ARGENTINA ACTUALLY RATIFIES TLATELOLCO.

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